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## The Blues Return

Photo By: PH2 (AW/NAC) Ryan Courtade

## February is African American History Month

By JO2 Carmichael Yopez  
Editor

February 2004 will mark the 78th annual observance of African American History. It is a month to celebrate and recognize the many contributions African Americans have made throughout history and what they are accomplishing today.

Occasionally the question arises, why do we celebrate ethnic and gender observances? According to William Leftwich, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Equal Opportunity, "Observances are needed as long as discrimination and bigotry ex-



Photo By: JO2 Carmichael

ist and the contributions of women and minorities are overlooked and misrepresented. Ethnic observances foster better understanding and respect for the multicolored American tapestry of races and ethnicities that have been ignored in the classroom and the community in the past."

*Continued on pg. 3*

## "Shop with a Cop"

NAF El Centro Security Officer, LT Michael Conn and AO2 (AW) Dominic Flores accompany 5-year-old Allen Bryson on his shopping spree at Wal-Mart.  
pg. 13



Meet NAFs  
Athlete of the Month  
Find out who these  
19" biceps belong to?  
pg. 14





# Blue Angels return to NAF for winter training

By JO2 Carmichael Yepez

Editor

The Blue Angels arrived on Friday Jan. 2, at NAF El Centro to begin their winter training for the next three months.

"It's good to be back to our winter training home," said Assistant Public Affairs Officer JOC (AW/SW) Victor Brabble. "This is where we fine tune our show. We love it here because we're always made to feel welcome."

The 126 member team started business the following Monday, January 5, when the Blue Angel's FA-18's could be seen rocketing into the heavens pulling maximum G-Force maneuvers.

"The Diamond Burner Loop is the ride of your life and never gets routine," said Blue Angels Flight Leader and Commanding Officer, CDR Russ Bartlett. "Pointing a shiny blue Hornet straight up in full afterburner is a blast, but it's even more fun when three of my best buds are flying their own jets three feet from mine. It's a great way to start out a 45-minute event. I love it ... What a life."

Upon their return, the crew was happy to find some of the changes on the base like the new barracks and renovated bowling alley.

"The new barracks are awesome," said PH2 Saul McSween. "I love having my own bathroom and the fact that we have our own kitchen."

The Blue Angels will be practicing till mid-March when they will perform the first air show of the season.



Photo By: PH2 (AW/NAC) Ryan Courtade

AO1 (AW) Nathan Kisamore salutes Blue Angels pilots during practice walkdown at NAF El Centro.

For Blue Angel enthusiasts who would like to meet the Blue Angels in person, the perfect opportunity will be at the NAF El Centro Annual Food Fest, which will take place Friday March 12, from 5:30 to 10 p.m. Besides meeting the Blue Angels, visitors will have the opportunity to sample local cuisine provided by many of the local restaurants in the Imperial Valley and enjoy live music played by the United States Navy Band "Millenium." There will also be static displays and attendees will be able to experience the only aerial pyrotechnic night show in the Valley.



Photo By: Massimo Di Mello

This year's air show will take place on Saturday March 13 from 9:30 a.m. till 3:30 p.m. Gates will open at 9 a.m. Admission is free. For more information, contact the NAF El Centro Public Affairs Office at 339-2519 or see our website at [www.nafec.navy.mil](http://www.nafec.navy.mil).

**The Sandpaper** is an authorized publication for members of the military services and their families. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense (DoD), or the U.S. Navy and do not imply endorsement thereof.

**CAPT Paul M. Ziegler**

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## Sunset in El Centro



Photo By:  
**LT John Kline**  
Weapons Department

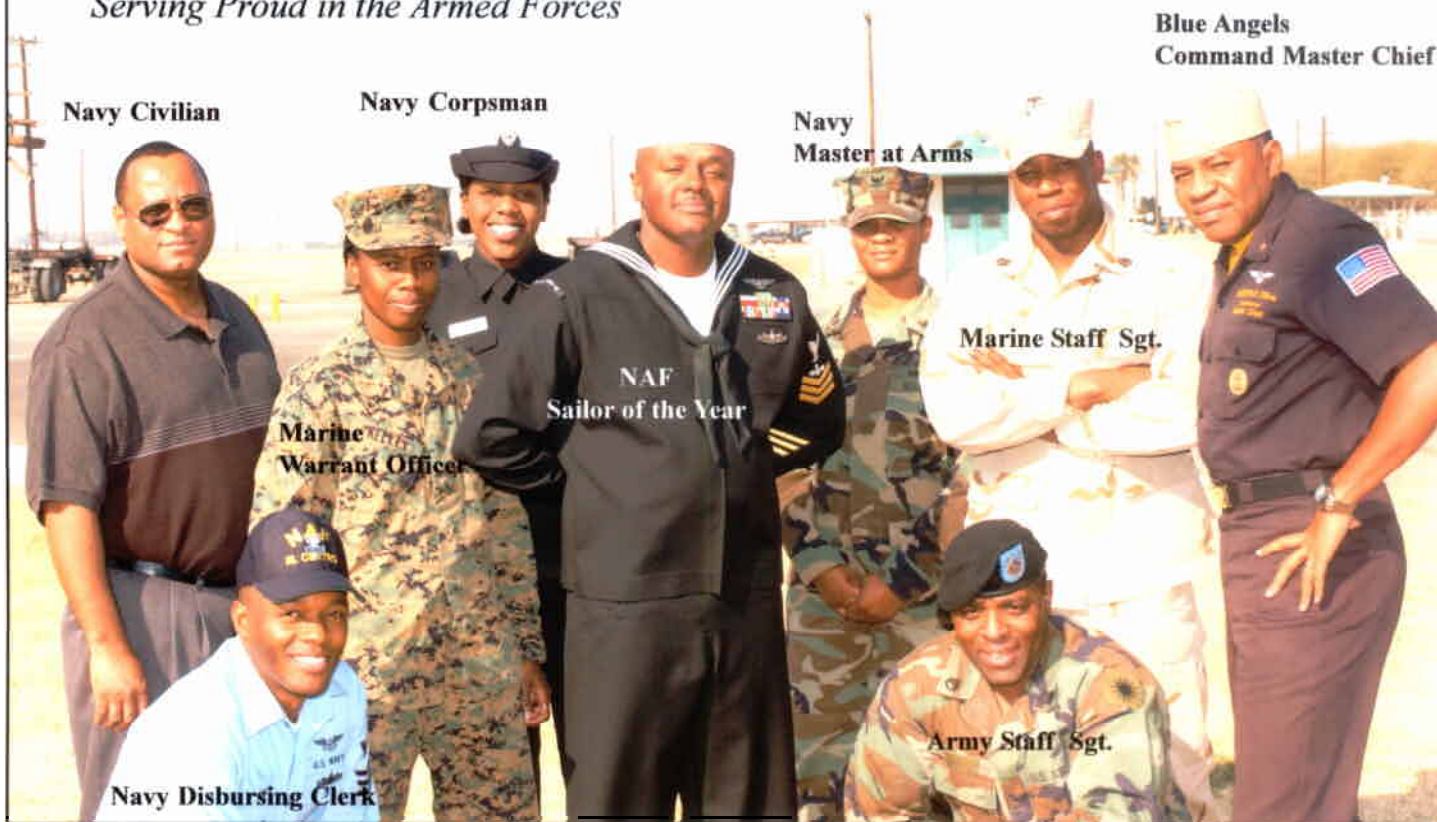
If you have a camera and would like to submit a picture you have taken, send it to [elcnpao@navy.mil](mailto:elcnpao@navy.mil)





# Celebrating African American History Month

*Serving Proud in the Armed Forces*



From left to right standing: John Williams (NAF Weapons Dept.), CW02 Charon Kelly (VMAQ3 visiting squadron), HN Candace Anderson (Medical Dept.), AO1(AW/SW) Lawrence Douglas (NAF's Sailor of the Year), MA3 Gloria Jemison (Security Dept.), Staff Sgt. Marcus Massey (VAQ 129 visiting squadron) and CMDCM Kevin D. Harris (Blue Angels). Kneeling: DK1 Clarence Smith (PSD Det.) and Staff Sgt. Michael Reid (Team Shield Army Det.)

## Continued from pg. 1

In 1926 Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the study of Negro Life and History which initiated the first observance of an ethnic group. In those days the words African, Afro and Black were seldom used. It was Dr. Woodson's hope that through this special observance, all Americans would be reminded of their ethnic roots and develop a mutual respect for all racial groups in America.

It is only recently that we are becoming more conscious of the many details that have been ignored and overlooked in the history books. It was one of Woodson's main intentions to neutralize the apparent ignorance and deliberate distortion of Black History and other peoples when he first initiated what was then called "Negro History Week."

Dr. Woodson was aware of symbolism in

the American culture and wisely chose February as the month in which to celebrate African American History. It contains the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, the week long celebration evolved into a month-long celebration.

Discrimination has no place in the military and will be dealt with swiftly when it happens. For some Sailors, joining the military was the first time they came in contact with people from different races and ethnic backgrounds. The only perceptions they have are those portrayed on TV. According to Leftwich, "If the contributions and achievements of minorities aren't brought to the attention of the nation during the observance months, most people wouldn't know of them."

Today more than 75,000 African Americans serve on active duty in the Navy. During the past year, a number of exceptional African American Sailors and civilians were recognized for outstanding service to country

Outstanding performance is what got AO1 (AW/SW) Lawrence Douglas from the Weapons Department selected as NAF El Centro's 2003 Sailor of the Year.

Going on 17 years in the Navy, Douglas arrived at NAF El Centro in April of 2002. He always wears an immaculate uniform. Some describe him as being too polite and soft spoken, and other describe him as very respectful and dedicated to work. His hard work led to his initial selection a Sailor of the Quarter 1st quarter 2003. His goal is to become a Chief Petty Officer in one of the most elite organizations in the Navy.

"My experience in the military has been challenging. The opportunities for success are there. If you have what it takes to succeed you can achieve your goals."

Douglas will be competing with 15 other Sailors in February for Navy Region South West Sailor of the Year.



# Blue Angels team up with NAF to increase bicycle safety awareness

By JOC (AW/SW) Victor Brabble  
*Blue Angels Public Affairs*

The Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, recently teamed up with security personnel from Naval Air Facility El Centro, to assist with the city of El Centro's Bicycle Safety Rodeo.

Sailors helped local law enforcement officers distribute safety helmets, inspect bicycles for safe operation and provide bicycle safety training to community children. Blue Angels Command Master Chief Kevin D. Harris said working with area youth is making an investment in our country's future.

"Young kids are the future military," he said. "We need to show them positive role models."

Chief Master-at-Arms Eric Burnett, NAF El Centro's Security Operations Chief, said although it was important for Sailors to interact with the local community, the main focus was to teach local youth how to ride their bicycles safely.

"It is important to continue relations with the community and to keep support flowing both ways," he said. "Ultimately, our goal was to help the kids to learn bicycle safety."



AO3 Tiant Foreman directs a child through the Safety Course.

Aviation Boatswain's Mate Fuels First Class Brian Groner, a Blue Angels crew chief, said volunteering his time gives him personal satisfaction.

"I like volunteering and helping anyway I can," he said. "I really enjoy working with kids."

Aviation Machinist's Mate First Class Radcliffe Samuels, a Blue Angels powerplants specialist, said he was glad to be able to spend time with the youth, and he wants to be a positive role model.

"This was a great opportunity to give back to the community," he said. "I like working with children, it give us a chance to be positive role models. Kids need

someone positive to look up to rather than be influenced by some of the stuff on television."

Aviation Machinist's Mate First Class Todd Steward, another Blue Angels powerplants specialist, said he is the type of person who likes to help no matter what.

"I like helping people out," he said. "Working with kids and making sure they are safe is all the more rewarding."

Terry Murray said her son, Matthew, looked forward to meeting local law enforcement and Navy personnel. She also said he will benefit from the bike rodeo.

"He wanted to come and see the police and Navy," she said. "This is good for him, he just started riding a bike and he needed another helmet - this is so helpful."

Matt Dessert, a member of the Optimist Club, which sponsored the event, attended the rodeo with his son Matthew. He said the rodeo is necessary and is a traditional event for his family.

"We are an organization that promotes youth programs," he said. "I participated as a kid in the rodeo and I want my son to interact with police and not be fearful."

John Morello of the Auto Club of Southern California attended the rodeo so he could inspect



children's bicycles for safety hazards. He advised bikes should be safety-checked often.

"The more you ride, the more you should inspect your bike," he said. "If the bike is unsafe, I tell the parent not to let the child ride it until the discrepancies are corrected."

Jerry Godsey, Imperial County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Supervisor, said the goals and the purpose of the bike rodeo were achieved.

"The goals were to make sure kids had good helmets and learned proper bicycle safety," he said. "Kids between ages five and 12 are more vulnerable for bicycle related injuries."

Godsey also said having volunteers donate their time to the local community children will leave a good impression.

"The guys were an absolute positive impact," he said. "For them to take time to spend with and help out the kids was good and incredibly necessary."

## Welcome Aboard!

Welcome aboard to our new Sailors and their families.

From left to right: AME2 (AW) Sean Duque, AO1 (AW) Christopher Morris and AZ2 (AW) Roderick Glass from (Strike) and AO2 Brian Conelly (Weps).  
Front row: ABFC (AW) Jose Butor (Sup), AG2 Abdul Kasimcarew (Weather) and MA3 Marco Vacca (Sec).



## Retirement

AMC (AW) Valentin D. Deatras retired

Friday, Jan. 16 after 23 years of honorable service. Above, Strike Fighter Officer in Charge, LCDR Richard Braunbeck, presents Mrs. Deatras with an award. The ceremony took place at the base gym.







Photos By: JO2 Carmichael Yopez

This is Herrera's second tour at Naval Air Facility El Centro. Herrera is a native of Bayard, New Mexico. He says being selected as Sailor of the Year has only reassured him he has picked the right career. "I love the Navy," Herrera said.



Cecilia was surprised when it was announced she was Employee of the Year. Later that evening a second surprise came when her husband was also recognized as Strike's Sailor of the Year.

Cecilia "It was a wonderful feeling."

For the Herreras this was probably one of the happiest days they had since they arrived to NAF El Centro almost a year ago. But the excitement wasn't over yet. Later that evening they attended the Strike Christmas party. It was here the Strike Officer-In-Charge, LCDR Richard Braunbeck announced AME1 Herrera as Strikes Sailor of the Year.

of the Year.

Earlier that day, Navy Exchange Manager, Mike Jackson, made a phone call to Petty Officer Herrera asking him if he could come by the Exchange during lunch time.

When he arrived, his wife who is an employee at the Exchange, was presented with the Employee of the Year Award.

"I couldn't explain how I felt at the time, but I was very happy," Louis said.

As for Cecilia she was crying with happiness and disbelief.

"Cecilia is one of those employees who is always going the extra step when it comes to helping out the customer," said NEX Manager Mike Jackson. "She always has a positive attitude and is always willing to help."

"I couldn't believe it," said

Strong emotions ran through Him as tears of pride poured down his eyes when he spoke about his career in the Navy.

"I was 14 years-old when I made the decision I was going to join the Navy," Herrera said "Now I know I made the right choice."

"I think he deserves it," said Cecilia. "He is a hard worker who loves what he does."

Herrera said that if he had the chance to do it all over again, he would choose the same career.

"I love the Navy and I love what I do," he said.

When asked what he would suggest to the young troops, He said, "Always strive for more, because there is always more to strive for. Don't just come in to get by."

## Husband and wife selected as top performers at NAF

By JO2 Carmichael Yopez  
Editor

Big smiles and tears of happiness are the only words that can describe how AME1 (AW) Louis

Herrera and his wife Cecilia felt on Thursday, Dec. 18, when they were selected as Strike Fighter's Sailor of the Year and NAF El Centro Navy Exchange Employee



### Retirement

AGC (AW) Marc A. Adams transferred to the fleet reserve at a ceremony which took place at Blue Angel Park on Friday Dec. 5. He retired after 20 years of active duty service. Adams was the Chief Petty Officer in Charge of the Weather Detachment at NAF El Centro.



### Reenlistment

It was a busy month for the Operation Officer as he reenlisted both AC2 Joshua Royek (left) AC2 John Pettigrove (right). AC2 Royek reenlisted on Friday Dec. 12 at a small ceremony, accompanied by his wife and daughter. Royek reenlisted for six years and received a \$28,243.68 reenlistment bonus. AC2 Pettigrove reenlisted for 2 years on Dec. 29 and received LCDR Lamont's re-gifted eggnog cake.





## Now that Saddam has been captured, what next?



**AOAN Kami Smith**

"He should be tried by his own people for all the pain he caused. They should punish him the same way he punished them."



**MA1 (SW/AW)**

**Gary Groesbeck**

"I think he should go in front of the UN counsel to be tried for his crimes. But that is after the CIA and combined coalition forces interrogate him to see where the weapons of mass destruction are."



**AMC (AW) Juan Mitchell**

"Honestly, I think he should be tried by the Iraqis, but security wise, I don't see how they are going to be able to do it."



**AOC (AW) Fred Walker**

"I think him being caught reduces the threat a little, he still has people out there that are still loyal to him. We still need to get a lot of information out of him. As far as punishment he should be made accountable for his deeds. I think we should make an example out of him to make it known we don't tolerate terrorists."

## Setting your financial goals for 2004



**By Dr. Lynn Flowers**

*Family Advocacy Representative*

As the New Year begins, it's important to take a look at your personal and family finances. It's a good time to establish your financial goals for the year. To achieve your goals, it is necessary to make a plan. For example, your goals might be to pay off your holiday debts, to save for the 2004 holiday season, to pay for college courses and to make regular contributions to your Thrift Savings Plan. With proper planning, you will have money for the things that you really need and want. A little money invested every month can quickly add up.

Once you have set your financial goals for 2004, take a close look at your income, your debts, and your expenses. Remember to use your net pay as you compute your income, rather than your gross pay. Expenses such as insurance, taxes, rent, and car payments are usually stable from month to month. Other expenses can vary a great deal from month to month. Variable expenses include groceries, utilities, transportation, clothing,

entertainment, and pet care. As you calculate your monthly budget, use the average expenses for these items over the past four months. After calculating your net income and your expenses, subtract the difference. Hopefully, the difference between your income and your expenses will show that you have money left over to help you reach your financial goals.

If you want to increase the amount of your money for your financial goals, consider some ways to save on expenses. Most of us spend money for things that we don't really need. Some of the most common examples include smoking, drinking, gambling, food, clothing, hobbies, and sports.

Smoking, drinking, and gambling are recreational. They can be quite expensive over time. Try to limit or even eliminate these recreations. The Navy offers programs to help you if these activities are causing problems for you.

You might be surprised to see food as "something we don't need." Eating is, of course, quite necessary. But, what we eat and where we eat can make a

tremendous difference. Most people spend one third of their food budget at restaurants, donut shops, and fast food places. Decreasing how often you eat out will help. Eating out for lunch is usually less expensive than eating out for dinner. Choosing restaurants that are pleasant, but not pricey will also help. When you shop for food, make sure that you are not ravenously hungry. Make a plan for what you need to purchase before you go shopping. Using coupons and shopping for specials can also help you save money on food.

Clothing is another necessity that can be unnecessarily expensive. Shop for the clothes you that you really need. The best times to purchase clothes are after Christmas, Easter and July 4. Retailers usually offer discounts during these times as they prepare to stock up for the next season. Outlet stores, discount stores, and the military exchange system offer some good values. It may be "cool," but rather costly, to shop in expensive stores. The quality of the clothing from expensive stores might be more perception than reality. Also, remember that the

NAF El Centro Thrift shop and other thrift shops have some incredible bargains on clothing.

Hobbies and sports can be healthy pursuits. But, budgeting for them is essential. For example, you might enjoy repairing old cars. You might even make some money by rebuilding a classic car. But, many classic car-rebuilding projects turn out to be "money pits." Sports activities can help you and your children stay in shape. But, check to see what they cost you in the long haul. Sports that require hefty fees for playing, or require frequent travel for competition, can be quite expensive.

Remember to budget some of your money to enjoy as you please. It is important to budget and to plan for the future. But, part of the future is now.

If you are having debt problems, contact your Command Financial Specialist. The Fleet and Family Support Office provides classes on financial planning and on ways to build wealth. Contact the Fleet and Family Support Office at 339-2241 for information.





# Reservist to receive unlimited shopping privileges

By Dr. Bonnie Powell  
Defense Commissary Agency

**FORT LEE, Va.** – All over America, Guard and Reserve personnel are burning their “little pink cards.”

The signing of the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act signaled unlimited shopping privilege for Reserve component members and their families. It also signaled the end of issuing, tracking, and checking off those little pink Commissary Privilege Cards. Previously, Reserve component personnel and their families were allowed 24 commissary shopping days per calendar year; and they had to have their privilege cards initialed at the commissary each day they shopped.

“It’s a long overdue and significant benefit enhancement for Guard and Reserve personnel

and their families as well as ‘gray area’ retirees,” said Joe Barnes, national executive secretary for the Fleet Reserve Association. Barnes is also a member of the Defense Commissary Agency Patron Council.

“We think it’s a great deal,” said Col. James Scott, director of individual and family support policy for the reserve component, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. “It also relieves the personnel center staffs and unit commands from a very expensive administrative burden in controlling and issuing the Commissary Privilege Card.” Approximately 1.2 million Guard and Reserve personnel and their authorized family members can now save an average of 32 percent or more over commercial grocery prices – every day if they wish. A family of four can save more than \$2,700 per year with regular commissary shopping.

Members of the Retired Reserve are also included in the



extended benefit, adding about another 200,000 happy shoppers. These “gray area retirees” were not formerly entitled to unlimited commissary shopping until they reached age 60.

“The major benefit for Guard and Reserve members now is the convenience of being able to make a quick stop at the commissary to buy a loaf of bread and a gallon of milk, or diapers, without worrying about running out of shopping trips for the year,” added Moffett.

The extended benefit may not

apply worldwide. While Reserve and Guard personnel not on active duty can enjoy unlimited shopping in the United States, Guam or Puerto Rico, many overseas installations are impacted by host nation agreements that limit on-base shopping by non-active-duty personnel. When visiting or living outside the United States or its territories, Guard and Reserve personnel should check with appropriate installation authorities about local commissary shopping privilege.



By NC1 Pamela Jensen  
Command Career Counselor

The Perform-to-Serve (PTS) program was expanded Jan. 1

2004 to include all first-term members in both Career Reenlistment Enlistment Objectives (CREO) 2 and CREO 3 ratings. PTS is a centralized reservation system that requires first term Sailors to receive authorization from the Navy Personnel Command before they reenlist. By centralizing the reenlistment authority, Navy leadership can even out manning levels so some rates are not overmanned while others are undermanned. Sailors are the primary beneficiaries of this new system, as they will have improved

## Perform to Serve changes for 2004

advancement opportunity. The Navy also benefits from improved manning and combat readiness capability.

As well as expanding PTS to include CREO 2 as well as CREO members, two other changes are being implemented. First is the “conversion only” option. As of Jan. 1 2004 members can request to be considered for conversion to another rate without having to be first considered for re-enlistment in their current rate. Also, Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (ASVAB) scores will have to be submitted for members requesting conversion.

If you have not previously re-enlisted, you will probably be requesting PTS approval 12-

15 months before your End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) or Projected Rotation Date (PRD). PTS is a program that lets you and your chain of command examine if you are in a career that is the best fit for you or is there a rate that you would enjoy more and have better advancement opportunities.

By the most recent policy memorandum, the following are the CREO 1 rates: AW (E1-4), HM(E1-4), MA (E5 and below), PN (E1-4) and RP (all). For more information, please read NAVADMIN 317/03 or see NC1 Jensen, ext.2329.



E-6 Exam  
March 4

E-5 Exam  
March 11

E-4 Exam  
March 18

Start studying  
Now!



# The Christmas Spirit of



Children's Christmas Party



Santa Visits the CDC



Santa Visits Youth Center



Los Vigilantes Christmas Parade



NAF El Centro Christmas Parade



By JO2 Carmichael Yezpe  
Editor

When it comes to the month of December NAF El Centronians really get into the spirit of Christmas.

It began with NAF's participation in the city of El Centro's Los Vigilantes Christmas parade on Saturday Dec. 6. Leading the parade was the base Color Guard followed by NAF's Fire Department. Then, riding in NAF's A-6 Intruder aircraft, the biggest entry in the parade, was Commanding Officer,

CAPT Paul Ziegler and Strikes Officer in Charge, LCDR Richard Braunbeck.

On Sunday Dec. 7, Santa Claus arrived in a big red Fire Truck to the Mirage Club, where the Base Children's Christmas Party was taking place.

On Dec. 12, it was dancing time at the Mirage Club when NAF El Centro celebrated its first Base Christmas Party.

Tuesday Dec. 16, the children at the Youth Center were surprised when they heard a "Ho ho ho" as Santa came in the room. He brought

them presents, asked them what they wanted for Christmas and then told a story. "Are you the real Santa," said one little boy. "I sure am," replied Santa. "Then where's your reindeer," asked the little boy. "Well they're up on the roof son."

The most festive celebration took place on Wednesday Dec. 17, when hundreds of base and local residents lined up along B Street to enjoy the NAF El Centro Christmas Parade. As drums rolled, children marched and creative floats passed, it was a hard decision for





# NAF El Centro



## Parade Winners

**CO's Award** Base Operations Float (The Tower)

**XO's Award** Kennedy School Marching Band

**CMC's Award** Holtville High School Marching Band

**Children's Award** Lincoln Elementary Road Runners



Base Chapel Angel Tree

Photos By:

L.T David Rodriguez, Karen Rodriguez

MAC Philip Burnett

JO2 Carmichael Yopez



the judges. "It was excellent as always," said CAPT Ziegler. "I had a hard time deciding" because all the entries were great. But one thing I would like to mention is that I would like to thank everyone for coming. Especially all the people who put in a lot of good work to make this happen."

The Christmas parade ended at the Flag Circle with the lighting of the base Christmas Tree. The tree came to life when ACAA Tiffany Warren gave the command to light up the tree.

"I was honored," said Warren who recently reported to the operations department. This was her first Christmas away from home.

The evening concluded with hot chocolate and cookies for all.

Once again, on Thursday Dec. 18, Santa, this time accompanied by Mrs. Claus, at the Child Development Center where toddlers awaited anxiously. After Santa presented them with presents, the children sang to Santa.

At 6 p.m. the parking lot at the Mirage Club was at full capacity for another Christmas party.

This time it was Strike Fighters Christmas party that was taking place.

On Tuesday Dec. 23, at a small gathering at the Base Chapel, more than 100 presents were presented to children from the New Creation Shelter and the Center for Family Solutions. To collect the presents, the Chapel placed Angel Trees at three different locations.

The Christmas celebrations concluded with a New Year's Eve party at the Mirage Club on base.





Photos By: JO2 Carmichael Yopez  
Tony Hunt

## Holiday Lighting Contest Winners



The Smiths



The Donovans



The Horts

Congratulations to everyone who decorated their homes for the holidays. There was a lot of creativity making it almost impossible to choose the winners. There were seven winners in three different categories.

### First Category

#### California Style Homes

1st Place AMEAA Jeremy Smith

2nd Place ENS Paul Douvier

3rd Place GM2 William Donovan

### 2nd Category

#### Adobe Style Homes

1st Place A02 Timothy Hort

2nd Place AE3 Hubbard Gravlee

3rd Place ATAN Timothy Boetticher

### 3rd Category

#### RV Park

Ken and Judy Worthen



ENS Douvier's Home



The Worthens



Mrs.  
Gravalee



The  
Boettichers

## Things you can and can't do in housing

By Tony Hunt  
Housing Department

**Parking Regulation:** Vehicles parked in the areas of Housing or CBH with expired tags, expired base registration, or without license plates are subject to towing at the owner's expense. Abandoned or inoperable vehicles are not permitted in the housing areas and will be towed away and impounded at the owner's expense. Housing occupants are responsible for keeping their assigned parking area/carport clean of oil and debris. Do not clutter the area by storing items other than vehicles in carport. Housing residents are not permitted to store vehicles for other people or grant permission to others to park in their neighborhood. It is also not permitted to park in driveways or carports of vacant housing units.

**Recreational Vehicles:** Due to space

constraints, pedestrian safety, and aesthetics, parking of recreational vehicles (RV) is not permitted in housing. The following policies apply:

- \*Vehicle maintenance regulations apply to RV's therefore; engine repair and bodywork are not allowed.
- \*RV's must not be plugged into any housing utilities.
- \*All motor driven vehicles must be in operating condition and have liability insurance.
- \*Flammables such as paints, thinners, and gasoline may not be stored in vehicles.

The RV storage lot is managed by Housing. Come by the Housing Office with current registration and proof of insurance for assignment and/or information. Our hours of Operation are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Automotive Maintenance:** We want to also

remind you that automobile/vehicle maintenance is strictly prohibited in the housing and barracks areas including carports, parking lots, and parking spaces or on the street. **Changing motor oil and other automotive fluids is strictly prohibited.** Minor adjustments such as tire changes are permitted in carports only. Also, for safety reasons cars are not to be left unattended on jacks, jack stands or ramps. Major repairs such, as transmission repairs and engine overhaul are also not permitted. Refurbishing any type vehicle is strictly prohibited.

### Other Reminders:

-The Executive Steering Committee (ESC), which was canceled in October due to the fires around the San Diego area, will be here February 26 through 27 2004. Let's start now with cleaning carports, front, side, and back yards in our housing areas. Working together, we can show them that NAF El Centro is "The Pearl of the Desert."





# Low Riding Chief



Photos By: Ruben Hernandez

McPherson originally worked on this 1966 Impala Super Sport 20 years earlier when he fixed it for his nephew. When he heard it was up for sale, he purchased it.

By JO2 Carmichael Yezpe  
Editor

When he is not running around coordinating the upgrade of the internal phone system, running the Combined Federal Campaign or volunteering to assist with other projects on base, you will find Chief Jon McPherson at the Auto Hobby Shop working on cars.

He rebuilt his first motor when he was 10. When he was 14, he bought his first car, a 1973 Impala which he restored into a show car.

Ever since, McPherson has loved working on cars whether

it's a low rider, a street rod or a daily driver.

The last show car he worked on was a 1987 Mustang GT when he was an E-5 in 1992. Since then, he took a break from building cars and focused more on his career.

A year after arriving to NAF El Centro in 2001, he made Chief. Now that one of his career goals was met, he started spending more of his spare time on his old hobby.

When he heard that a car he previously built 20 years ago was up for sale, he jumped at the opportunity to purchase it.



It was a 1966 Impala Super Sport he had built during his sophomore and junior year in high school.

It was almost the way he originally built it. It still had the Candy Brandy paint job with patterns and custom upholstered burgundy interior.

His car arrived Thanksgiving weekend and he was now ready to put some time into a car he could call his own ... again.

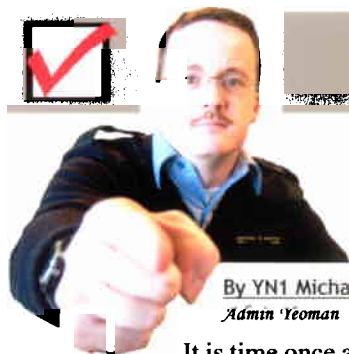
"I enjoy helping other people work on their cars," said McPherson. "But it's nice to have my own to work on."

His first plan was to enter it

into the base Christmas Parade after which he plans to make some improvements and upgrades to bring it up to date.

"I'm going to re-chrome a lot of suspension parts, upgrade the suspension to an air bag suspension and possibly repaint and redo the interior," added McPherson

Since he has been driving his car on base, McPherson has received numerous comments that it is strange to see a Chief driving a car like that and that he needs to sell it to them, but he says he doesn't mind being called the Low Riding Chief.



By YN1 Michael Martin  
Admin Yeoman

## It is your right to vote



per precinct. In fact your vote does count, and you can make a difference.

Voting is a right and a privilege that many in the world do not have. We, as United States citizens, are very lucky to have the free elections we have. Many countries have governments and leaders forced upon them, often at great loss of liberty and life. There have been dictatorial regimes all over the world, including Iraq, Iran, Russia, Germany, China, Korea, Cuba and many others. The citizens in those countries had a common bond; no voting rights and elections that are (or were) by no means fair and free.

Americans have fought and died to preserve our right to self-determination. We revolted against the rule of Great Britain in

1776 to assure self-determination continued on for our citizenry. Whether conservative, liberal or somewhere in between, we should all honor and cherish the sacrifices made in support of freedom and democracy and exercise our right and responsibility to vote in every election we are able to participate in. When you choose not to vote you increase the voting power of every other responsible citizen who chooses to vote and decrease your own power to influence the government that serves and protects your freedom.

For more information about voting and the Navy's Voting Assistance Program, call YN1 Martin at 339-2544 or check out the Navy's voting website at [www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap](http://www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap).

It is time once again to get ready for the quadrennial ritual of choosing our nation's next president, along with choosing senators, governors and many other local elected officials. Of course, the question always comes up - why should I vote? Many people think that their vote doesn't count.

In 1960 John F. Kennedy beat Richard Nixon by an average of less than one vote per precinct. In 1968, Richard Nixon beat Hubert Humphrey by less than three votes



# Home Schooling your children

By SK1 Robert Smeltzer  
Supply Department

On my wall hangs a map of the United States of America, with a copy of the Declaration of Independence to the right of it. The Declaration of Independence hangs as a reminder that the colonists declared independence from Great Britain. Freedom from tyranny and religious persecution were the driving force that brought many of the colonists to this new land. These are but a few of the facts that I was taught in school.

By 1775, many schools and a few colleges had been established. Ministers and religious denominations established the first institutes of higher education. The colleges Harvard, William and Mary, and later Brown and Colgate, were founded to further the education of their religious and civic leaders. Remember that the United States was yet to be born. Each colony educated its own.

Early education began, as it does today, in the home. Mother and grandmother trained the child, while father and grandfather worked to support the family. The young children had chores to do during the day and were read to in the evening. Schools were originally founded to teach children to read, so that they could read the Bible. The schools were small and the teachers had a personal involvement with their students. Many children started school, but the boys often stopped at sixth grade. At 12-years-old, boys were very useful in providing for the family. Those children who stayed in school were taught the three R's, 'Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic, to the tune of a hickory stick,' to enable children to become productive citizens.

Educated men and women went into business and government or became doctors, lawyers, ministers, nurses or teachers.

It was not until the late 1800's that mass education developed in America. As schools became larger and larger, the one-on-one interaction between teacher and pupil became less and less. Throughout the last century and especially since the late 1960's, schools have some major issues. Lower placement test scores, students with weapons, forced busing, educators inability to discipline without the threat of a lawsuit and other factors have taken away the focus on teaching the basics. Recently, many have been taking a closer look at where our education system is headed. School choice and the voucher system are programs that allow the parent to send their child to a school with greater opportunity or less fear of violence. Another alternative is home schooling.

There are many reasons for families to home school. For some it is to spend precious time with their children. Another reason is to pass on the same principles and beliefs that were instilled in them. Home schooling also allows freedom to travel without a loss of class time. For instance, we made a PCS move in January and took 30 days leave. That could have caused quite a disruption in our children's education. As a result of home schooling, we were able to continue classes and did not have to change from one school to another. While researching this article, I spoke to a young woman who was taught by her father and mother for three years. During that three-year period, the family sailed from



Photo By: JO2 Carmichael Yezep

Sisters Amber and Kristen Smeltzer prepare to say the pledge of allegiance before starting class. Their mother Jeanette has been instructing them since they were 4-years-old.

Newport Beach to Mexico, Central and South America, through the Panama Canal to the Virgin Islands and back. Her dad was also able to teach local children at stops along the way.

I have been asked if my children are being deprived socially as a result of not going to a local school. My answer is "No"! When I went to public school, we were not able to talk to each other during class. Lunch and recess were the main times for social interaction. My children spend time at church, gymnastics, swimming and play practice, talking and playing with their friends. The woman who sailed with her family and was home schooled received an education with more social interaction than most of us will ever have the opportunity to achieve.

A typical school day at our house begins with "The Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag of the United States. This is followed by singing the 'The Star Spangled Banner.' Next comes the pledge to the Christian flag and the Bible, and then class begins. Reading, writing, arithmetic, phonics, piano and Bible are taught in the classroom. Outside of the classroom, the children learned to

plant seeds and watch the plants develop. During a trip to Seattle, they learned how a ship was raised and lowered in a lock, so that it may continue its journey out to sea.

Home schooling can be done in different ways. The parent, using an established curriculum, can teach and keep all school records. The parent can send all work to a school, which will keep the students permanent record or the student can use Distance Learning, much the way universities do today. A very important aspect of this type of schooling is that the one-on-one interaction between teacher and student is restored. No one is lost in the crowd or left behind. It demands a lot of personal interaction with your children. A field trip with other home school children allows the students to have fun, while the parents can share ideas and have adult interaction.

Whatever your choice of schooling, remember that you are developing tomorrows citizens. A strong America must continue to be educated by the values those colonists passed down to us. Don't let your children down!





# Cops take children on Christmas Shopping Spree

By JO2 Carmichael Yezpe  
Editor

"What is going on?," said a group of people when they saw a huge caravan of law enforcement vehicles that stretched for more than a mile on Imperial Avenue. It looked like a scene from the TV show "COPS". There was even a helicopter hovering overhead.

Close to 100 vehicles from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (DEA), Immigration Naturalization Service (INS), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and other Imperial Valley law enforcement agencies, arrived at the Wal-Mart parking lot. Those who didn't know what was going on, thought something big was about to happen, maybe they had caught one of America's Most Wanted. But after seeing child after child come out of police vehicles, they learned it was something different.

On Saturday, Dec. 6, 90 children from the Imperial Valley had the opportunity to go Christmas shopping thanks to local law enforcement agencies that pull together to sponsor the "Shop with a Cop" program. The program provides children of low income families the opportunity to pair up with a law enforcement agent and go on a \$100 shopping spree at Wal-Mart.

"The program was started by the border patrol," said one officer. "This is the second year for this event and it has been a great success. It is one way of giving back to the community."

Last year the program started with 65 children and this year the number jumped to 90. According to LT D. Long, Chairperson of the

"Shop with a Cop" Committee from Centinela Prison, they were able to help more children this year thanks to the fact that more law enforcement agencies were involved.

For Naval Air Facility El Centro, this was their first time participating. Eleven Sailors from the Security Department joined more than 100 law enforcement officers involved in the event. The program started at Southwest High School where officers were partnered up with a child. After a brief lunch, the entourage of patrol vehicles headed for Wal-Mart for one of the biggest shopping sprees in the valley.

It was hectic in the toy section at Wal-Mart, as 90 children accompanied by their armed escorts stormed the isles for their favorite toys.

Bicycles, GI-Joes, Barbie dolls, video games and the latest toys filled baskets as officers used their fingers to tally up the count. It was hard to distinguish who was having more fun, the children loading up the carts, or the officers pushing the carts.

"This is great" said one law enforcement officer. "Many of these children would probably receive one toy for Christmas, but thanks to this program these children will have a brighter Christmas day."

Each child had a tab of \$100 to fill up their shopping carts and almost all went over the limit. This is where the good spirit of the officers kicked in as they paid for the rest out of their own pocket. For the majority of children this opportunity was to good to be true and they made sure they got their brothers and



Photos By: JO2 Carmichael Yezpe



1. It took more than 20 minutes for the law enforcement vehicles to arrive at the Wal-Mart parking lot. They had their lights flashing and sirens roaring the entire route. 2. MASN Elizabeth Hoppman rides with her shopping partner on their way to Wal-Mart. 3. A group of Sailors and their child shopping partners prepare to enter Wal-Mart. 4. MACS (SW/AW) Cheryl Patterson helps her shopping partner check the price on a toy. Most children went over the limit, but the officers paid out of their own pocket.

sisters back home a present too.

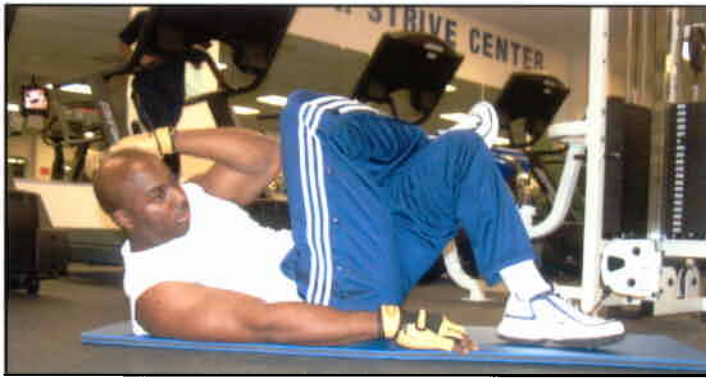
"Don't you think you're a little too big for that toy," one FBI agent said. "It's for my little sister sir," replied a 6-year-old boy with an uncertain expression in his face.

"It almost brought tears to my eyes," said one officer when she noticed how the children were not only shopping for themselves, but for their siblings.

Of the 90 children selected to participate, four were from NAF El Centro. "This is an awesome day. I'm having so much fun I

can't believe it," said 7-year-old Michael Yezpe. "My partner was the coolest agent."

"I think the kids enjoyed it very much. They all had smiles on their faces," said LT Michael Conn, Security Officer for NAF El Centro. "The program was well organized, involving 90 children and a lot of law enforcement agents. It was a very rewarding experience and a very worthwhile event. We plan on participating in next year's fund raising events."



## NAF's Athlete of the Month

By JO2 Carmichael Yopez

Editor

He has 19" biceps and can bench 425 pounds. For AO1 Frederico Lewis, lifting weights is what keeps him going day after day. He has been lifting since he was in high school and even to this day it is something he does religiously.

At NAF El Centro his daily routine begins at 5 a.m. at the base gym four to five times a week

"Lifting is like brushing my teeth," said Lewis. "I got to do it, or I don't feel right."

As the Weapons Leading Petty Officer (LPO), Lewis has a lot of responsibility being in

charge of 36 Sailors who build up to 150 bombs per day that can weigh up to 2,000 pounds each. There is also a time element involved as each request has to be completed in order for squadrons to perform their daily training missions. The day does not end until the job is done. It can be a stressful work day, but that is something that can rarely be seen when it comes to Lewis.

"It relaxes me when I work out," said Lewis. "That is why I do it in the morning before I come to work. Lifting weights has given me a sense of self confidence and accomplishment by setting short term goals, meeting them, and setting more. Its a never ending cycle that carries over to work habits and other things in life."

"He handles even difficult situations with ease which certainly helps our work," said AO2 Paul Chickowski.

Photos By: JO2 Carmichael Yopez

Lewis says that it takes dedication to work out. For whatever reason people do it, they have to stick to it.

"He is a go to type of guy," said Weapons Officer LT John Kline. "He is a great motivator who is about taking care of the troops."

"Whatever your reasons are for lifting (lose weight, gain mass, etc.), you have to be dedicated and stick to it. Don't worry about what everyone else is lifting in the gym. Do what ever works for you and stick to your program," Lewis said. "Make it a way of life."



### Commissary Spelling Contest

The El Centro Commissary held it's 1st annual Spelling Bee Contest Friday Jan. 16. Winners were Sam Villanueva age 11 and Keoni Castellano age 7. Congratulation to both.

Photos By: Leslie Villanueva







## Attention to Quarters

By JO2 Carmichael Yepez

Editor

Quarters was held on Thursday Dec. 18 in Bldg. 401. The following awards were presented.

From left to right, AZ2 Tracy Mummert received a Navy Achievement Medal. AO3 Michael Fox was selected as NAF's Junior Sailor of the Month (JSOM). On Thursday Jan. 2, quarters was held at the chapel, where AOAN Shannon House from the Weapons Department was selected as JOSM for Dec.

Elizabeth Urquhart, a representative from the Phoenix House in Descanso, presented CAPT Paul Ziegler and LT David Rodriguez with a plaque in appreciation for



Photos By: JO2 Carmichael Yepez

support during the San Diego wild fires. The Phoenix House which sheltered 39 inpatients were evacuated and NAF provided temporary shelter for a week.

The students also designed a picture frame, which was presented to the base.

Before talking about future events, CAPT Ziegler first thanked ITC Jon McPherson and all those involved in the Combined Federal Campaign. Then he thanked all those involved in the community events that have been



taking place. "I appreciate everyone getting involved from the Color Guard to all the volunteers. Everyone has done a great job."

# NAF Fire Department pays visit to local hospital

By Engineer Dane Knight

NAF Fire Department

On the morning of Dec. 24, five personnel from the Federal Fire Department met at El Centro Regional Hospital to begin their annual visit to the pediatric wards at both El Centro Regional and Pioneer's Memorial hospitals.

Since 1995, Naval Air Facility's fire department has been visiting the local hospitals to hand out gifts and candy to the unfortunate children who become sick during the holiday season. Additionally each December, the department takes a Christmas tree to El Centro Regional and decorates it. Each year has been memorable with great response from the hospital staff, parents and children. This year's event was just as joyous.

Participating this year were Assistant Fire Chief Ronnie Valenzuela, Engineers Dennis Robertson, Randy Caldwell and Dane Knight, EMS Dispatcher Holly Arnaiz and, of course, Sparky the Dalmatian. Like clock

work, we met Wednesday morning at the lobby of El Centro Regional and were escorted to the pediatric ward. Sparky handed out stuffed animals and candy to all the children and even posed for a few pictures. To make sure that no children are missed, we also visited the emergency room so as to try and brighten the day of all children that were not feeling well.

With a huge stocking still full of gifts and candy, our crew headed to Pioneer's Memorial Hospital to spread the Christmas spirit of joy and laughter. Just as excited as El Centro Regional, the staff at Pioneer's Memorial eagerly anticipated our arrival. We were glad to see that this year's flu bug did not cause Pioneer's pediatric ward to be filled to capacity. No child should spend their Christmas in bed, sick from a nasty cold or flu. Again, Sparky hammed it up with silly antics and posed for more pictures. Our last stop was Pioneer's emergency room to make sure all the children were visited. As we made our departure



Photos By: Dane Knight



NAF El Centro fire fighters say they feel proud to put a smile on a child's face.

from each hospital, we promised to be back again next year.

All the firefighters and departmental staff here at NAF El Centro Federal Fire look forward to this time of year. It offers us the chance to take time from our busy schedule to meet with the commu-

nity in a more positive forum than emergency response situations. We appreciate the donations from El Centro's Wal-Mart and Home Depot. These two stores assisted us this year with our annual Christmas efforts. Wal-Mart donated stuffed animals and candy, while Home Depot donated the artificial Christmas tree which was taken to El Centro Regional Medical Center.



# MWR Calendar

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday   |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|
|  <b>1</b><br>Watch the Super Bowl<br>@ the Mirage Club, the<br>Cyber Cafe or the<br>Bowling Center.                              | <b>2</b><br>Snow League Steak Dinner<br>Welcome Angels at the<br>Mirage. Ext. 2330  |  <b>3</b><br>Karaoke Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 p.m.   |  <b>4</b><br>Ladies Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 to 11:30 p.m. Ext 2330    | <b>5</b><br>Story time "Winnie the<br>Pooh" at the Library 10 a.m.<br>Ext. 2470 |  <b>6</b><br>Radio (PG)<br>7 p.m. Bldg. 401  |  <b>7</b><br>School of Rock (PG-13)<br>5 p.m.<br>Underworld<br>(R) 7 p.m. Bldg. 401<br>Powder Puff<br>Mechanics Class<br>11 AM 11:00 AM 5:00 PM<br>339-2461 |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>9</b>  |  <b>10</b><br>Karaoke Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 p.m.  |  <b>11</b><br>Ladies Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 to 11:30 p.m. Ext 2330   | <b>12</b>   |  <b>13</b><br>The Santa Clause 2 (G)<br>7 p.m. Bldg. 401<br>Yuma Shipping Trip<br>10:00 AM to 11:00 AM<br>339-1486 |  <b>14</b><br>Under The Tuscan Sun<br>(PG-13) 5 p.m.<br>Cold Creek Manor<br>(R) 7 p.m. Bldg. 401  |
| <b>15</b>   | <b>16</b><br><b>Presidents Day</b>  |  <b>17</b><br>Karaoke Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 p.m.<br>Bicycle Maintenance<br>Class @ Gear Issue<br>10 a.m. Ext. 2486 |  <b>18</b><br>Ladies Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 to 11:30 p.m. Ext 2330  | <b>19</b><br>Kids Dental Education Day<br>@ the Library.<br>Ext. 2470           |  <b>20</b><br>Tuck Everlasting (PG)<br>7 p.m. Bldg. 401   |  <b>21</b><br>My Dog's Daughter<br>(PG-13) 5 p.m.<br>Out of Time (R) 7 p.m.<br>Bldg. 401   |
| <b>22</b>   | <b>23</b>   |  <b>24</b><br>Karaoke Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 p.m.  |  <b>25</b><br>Ladies Night<br>@ the Mirage Club<br>8 to 11:30 p.m. Ext 2330 | <b>26</b>   |  <b>27</b><br>The Mule (PG-13)<br>7 p.m. Bldg. 401<br>Diego Shipping<br>10:00 AM to 11:00 AM<br>339-1486         |  <b>28</b><br>Fighting Temptation<br>(PG-13) 5 p.m.<br>Runway Jury (R) 7 p.m.<br>Bldg. 401  |
| <b>29</b><br><br>Hot Wings Family Platter<br>Special and Pizza all the<br>month of February. Hot<br>Stuff Pizza. Call 339-2918 | Swim Team practice<br>Monday through<br>Thursday @ the Small<br>Pool from 4 to 6 p.m. Ext.<br>2627<br> Water Aerobics<br>&<br>High Aerobics<br>Daily @ the Small Pool<br>10:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.<br> Celebrate American Heart<br>Month @ the Fitness<br>Center. Jog, Run or Walk<br>for Distance. Ext. 2488 |  |  |   |   | Junior Bowling Every<br>Saturday<br><br>From 11 a.m. To 1 p.m.  |

## MWR Employment Opportunities

- \* Recreational Aid at the Fitness Center
  - \* Educational Aid at the CDC
- For more information call MWR at 339-2475

## Renewal of Marriage Vows Ceremony

February 14 (Valentine's Day)

at 6 p.m. at the Base Chapel

Call 339-2461 or email Chaplain Church

at robert.a.church@navy.mil if you would like to participate